

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-307. (cancelled)

308. (currently amended) A content and service handling method comprising:

maintaining an inventory of advertising opportunities in content and services; and

binding inventory with advertisements based at least in part on a binding function, each advertisement including advertising content and additional information pertaining to binding used for computing the binding function.

309. (previously presented) The method of claim 308 further comprising delivering the bound inventory.

310. (previously presented) The method of claim 308 in which the inventory is controlled by an entity.

311. (previously presented) The method of claim 310 in which the entity is a service provider.

312. (previously presented) The method of claim 310 in which the entity is a network affiliate.

313. (previously presented) The method of claim 310 in which the entity is a network provider.

314. (previously presented) The method of claim 310 in which the entity is a content provider.

315. (previously presented) The method of claim 308 in which the inventory is controlled by a plurality of entities.

316. (previously presented) The method of claim 308 in which different portions of the inventory are controlled by a plurality of entities.

317. (previously presented) The method of claim 316 further comprising binding advertisements by an operator on behalf of the plurality of entities.

318. (previously presented) The method of claim 309 in which delivering is in response to a request for content.

319-340. (cancelled)

341. (previously presented) The method of claim 308 in which each advertisement includes guidance information.

342. (previously presented) The method of claim 341 in which guidance information includes advertisement insertion information.

343. (previously presented) The method of claim 341 in which guidance information includes information about an intended audience.

344. (previously presented) The method of claim 343 in which the information about the intended audience includes a mailing list.

345. (previously presented) The method of claim 343 in which the information about the intended audience includes a phone list.

346. (previously presented) The method of claim 341 in which guidance information includes scheduling information.

347. (currently amended) An interactive advertising system comprising:
a store of advertisements, each of the advertisements including advertising content and
guidance information;
an inventory representing advertising opportunities in content and services; and
a service binding advertisements to inventory, based at least in part on a binding function
computed using the guidance information.

348. (previously presented) The system of claim 347 further comprising a means for delivering the inventory bound with advertisements to a terminal device.

349. (previously presented) The system of claim 348 in which the terminal device is a set top box.

350. (previously presented) The system of claim 347 in which the inventory is controlled by an entity.

351. (previously presented) The system of claim 350 in which the entity is a local network operator.

352. (previously presented) The system of claim 350 wherein the entity is a network affiliate operator.

353. (previously presented) The system of claim 350 in which the entity is a network operator.

354. (previously presented) The system of claim 350 in which the entity is a content provider.

355. (previously presented) The system of claim 347 in which the inventory is owned by a plurality of entities.

356-374. (cancelled)

375. (previously presented) The system of claim 347 in which guidance information includes advertisement insertion information.

376. (previously presented) The system of claim 347 in which guidance information includes information about an intended audience.

377. (previously presented) The system of claim 376 in which guidance information includes an address list.

378. (previously presented) The system of claim 376 in which guidance information includes a phone list.

379. (previously presented) The system of claim 347 in which guidance information includes scheduling information.

380. (currently amended) A method for placement of advertising content or services for presentation to one or more users comprising:

maintaining an inventory of opportunities to present advertising content during delivery of content or services to one or more users;

importing self-guiding advertisements, each advertisement including advertising content and one or more of instructions, procedures, and software programs for binding the advertisement to the inventory;

binding ~~advertising~~ the advertisements to the inventory according to the one or more of instructions, procedures, and software programs associated with the ~~advertising~~ advertisements; and

composing the advertising content associated with the ~~advertising~~ advertisements with the content or services.

381. (previously presented) The method of claim 380 further comprising delivering the composed content to the one or more users.

382. (previously presented) The method of claim 380 further comprising importing the advertising content from an advertiser's network.

383. (cancelled)

384. (currently amended) The method of claim ~~383~~ 380 wherein binding the ~~advertising advertisements~~ to the ~~content~~ inventory includes binding ~~the advertising~~ each advertisement using the one or more of instructions, procedures, and software programs associated with the advertisement to discover one or more of inventory, user information, and information to be factored into a binding decision.

385. (cancelled)

386. (cancelled)

387. (cancelled)

388. (previously presented) The method of claim 380 further comprising importing ancillary data associated with the content or services.

389. (previously presented) The method of claim 388 wherein the ancillary data includes available advertising times associated with the content or services.

390. (previously presented) The method of claim 388 wherein importing the ancillary data includes importing said data conveyed in-band with its associated content.

391. (previously presented) The method of claim 388 wherein importing the ancillary data includes importing said data conveyed out-of-band from its associated content.

392. (currently amended) The method of claim 380 further comprising importing and storing data associated with the ~~advertising~~ advertisements for use to associate advertising content with other content.

393. (currently amended) The method of claim 392 wherein binding the ~~advertising~~ advertisements to the inventory includes using the stored data associated with the ~~advertising~~ advertisements.

394. (currently amended) The method of claim 380 wherein binding the ~~advertising~~ advertisements to the inventory includes optimizing the binding using factors that include information about available ~~advertising~~ advertisements and information about the content ~~and or~~ service with which the advertising content is to be associated.

395. (currently amended) The method of claim 394 wherein the factors used to optimize the binding include one or more of advertiser agreements, advertising placements schedules, and useful lifetimes for ~~advertising~~ advertisements.

396. (previously presented) The method of claim 380 wherein maintaining an inventory includes maintaining an inventory of dynamically appearing inventory.

397. (previously presented) The method of claim 396 wherein the content or service includes a time-shifted viewing of content.

398. (currently amended) The method of claim 396 wherein binding the ~~advertising~~ advertisements to the inventory includes dynamic binding of the ~~advertising~~ advertisements to the dynamically appearing inventory before the inventory is consumed.

399. (currently amended) The method of claim 398 wherein the dynamic binding includes binding the ~~advertising~~ advertisements just in time before the inventory is consumed;

400. (currently amended) The method of claim 396 wherein composing advertising content with the content or services includes replacing ~~advertisements~~ advertising content in the content or service.

401. (previously presented) The method of claim 380 wherein composing the advertising content with the content or service includes replacing the advertising content in the content or service.

402. (previously presented) The method of claim 380 further comprising mediating handling of content or services from numerous originators.

403. (previously presented) The method of claim 402 wherein the mediating of the handling of content or services includes mediating handling of the advertising content or services.

404. (currently amended) The method of claim 402 wherein binding the ~~advertising advertisements~~ advertising advertisements to the inventory includes binding the ~~advertising advertisements~~ advertising advertisements to an inventory of opportunities in the content or services from the numerous originators.

405. (previously presented) The method of claim 402 wherein the mediating of the handling of content or services includes maintaining an inventory of opportunities in the content or services from the numerous originators.

406. – 422. (cancelled)

423. (currently amended) A method for placement of advertising content or services for presentation to one or more users comprising:

maintaining an inventory of opportunities to present advertising during delivery of content or services to one or more users;

importing self-guiding advertisements that include one or more of ~~information~~, instructions, procedures, and software programs for binding the advertisement to the inventory;

binding advertising including the self-guiding advertisements to the inventory according to one or more of ~~information~~, instructions, procedures, and software programs associated with the advertising; and

composing advertising content associated with the advertising with the content or services.